



inspiring achievement

**Faculty of Health Sciences
School of Nursing & Midwifery**

Research Hub

invites you to the

Public Seminar

Hopeful projections and intractable realities: Discourses of migrant maternity in Aotearoa/New Zealand

The empirical study of migrant maternities offers a unique theoretical vantage point for considering wider issues such as imperialism, nation building and reproduction. Using the white settler context of Aotearoa/New Zealand, Ruth De Souza details an empirical study that explored the discourses used by well child health providers to represent their work with migrant mothers. Ruth De Souza argues that migrant maternities are constituted through a repertoire of medical and nursing discourses combined with culturalist and assimilatory discourses that draw on liberal pluralist notions of citizenship. These require the migrant mother to take up normalising or colonising practices that enforce adaptation to dominant cultural norms such as autonomy and independence. These discursive practices or normalising strategies of power are colonising because they involve the re-ordering of space and the surveillance and control of mothers. Ruth De Souza argues that health professionals discipline and regulate gendered bodies in racialised ways that reinforce and reproduce colonial power relations and that this has the potential to contribute to health inequalities and ethically and socially unacceptable outcomes. Further development and refinement of cultural safety, an indigenous ethical form of nursing practice is advocated in order to counter dominant beliefs that racism can be ameliorated with moral education and greater cultural knowledge.

presented by

Ruth De Souza

Senior Research Fellow

Auckland University of Technology

Ruth DeSouza is a Senior Research Fellow and Coordinator of AUT University's Centre for Asian and Migrant Health Research and Programme Leader of the Bachelor of Health Science (Health Promotion) in Auckland, New Zealand. Ruth has worked as a nurse (in postnatal settings and maternal mental health), educator and researcher and is completing her PhD about migrant maternity in New Zealand. Ruth is involved in various governance roles to do with health provision, community sector research and migrant and refugee settlement.

Friday, 4th of June 2010

Time: 1.00pm

Venue: N335 (Sturt Lecture Theatre)

For further information please contact gina.kasprzyk@flinders.edu.au or on 8201 5317